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UM INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL PRESENTS A TASTE OF THE WORLD

MISSOULA--

Here's your chance to travel around the world without ever leaving Missoula.

The annual International Food and Culture Festival at The University of Montana will offer a taste of everything from Japanese sushi and Norwegian lefse to African dance and Bosnian folk songs.

This year's event, "Taste 2000 -- A Once in a Lifetime Experience," will take place Sunday, April 9, from 1 to 6 p.m. in the University Center. There is no charge for admission, although a \$1 donation is appreciated.

More than 40 countries will be represented at the festival, which is organized by UM's International Student Association. According to ISA President Christie Tsang, at least half of the organization's 370 international students take part in the festival.

"It's really amazing how diverse our group is," said Tsang, who is from Hong Kong. "The festival is an opportunity for us to share our cultures with the University and Missoula community. Everyone who is participating is really excited about it."

Local ethnic organizations such as the Celtic Dragon Pipe Band, La Raza Unida and the

-more-

Elenita Brown Dance Company also will participate.

The festival kicks off at 1 p.m. with a brief ceremony and parade in the UC, followed by the opening of the food booths, informational booths, culture show and Children's World.

Approximately 20 food booths will feature favorite recipes of students from all over the world, including beef empanadas from Argentina, dumplings from Tibet, tacos from Mexico, curried beef from Malaysia, chicken in peanut sauce from Thailand, and cherry cake and apple tart from Germany. Booths will be located in the UC atrium, and dishes are priced at 50 cents to \$4. Food goes fast, so hungry guests are advised to show up early.

The culture show will offer nearly two dozen traditional and contemporary performances throughout the day on the UC Commons stage, including traditional dances from Mexico, Thailand, Africa, Scotland and Scandinavia. Performances from Japan will include a tea ceremony, fashion show and vaudeville performance.

Children's World offers similar events and activities designed especially for kids, such as a Malaysian shadow-puppet play, sumo wrestling and origami (Japanese paper-folding).

Informational booths will present literature, maps and photographs on individual countries, making the festival perfect for those planning their dream vacation.

According to German exchange student and ISA program director Alex Gulde, the festival offers a unique opportunity to explore many different countries in one day.

"What we do is bring the world to your doorstep," Gulde said. "It's all about widening one's horizons."

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